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Investing in rural people

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional window to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) for Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Mixed-Methods Study to Inform Policy and Programmes

Note to Executive Board representatives

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For: Approval

Recommendation for approval

The Executive Board is invited to approve the recommendation for the proposed grant as contained in paragraph 21.

President's report on a proposed grant under the global/regional window to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) for Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Mixed-Methods Study to Inform Policy and Programmes

I. Background and compliance with IFAD Policy for Grant Financing

1. Unemployment and underemployment among young people are critical issues in international development and will remain so in years to come. This is particularly the case in sub-Saharan Africa, where half of the population is under 25. It is projected that each year between 2015 and 2035, there will be 500,000 more 15-year-olds than the year before. But the rate of productive employment creation lags far behind economic and youth population growth, and wage employment remains low.
2. Even under the most optimistic scenario, the primarily urban sectors of most sub-Saharan African economies will not be able to provide decent jobs for the growing number of young people who are set to enter the labour market. There is an emerging belief among policymakers and development professionals that the agricultural sector, and the broader rural economy, are keys to tackling the problem of youth employment in Africa. The proposition is that agriculture is a sector of change and opportunity, and the large number of young people entering the sector will accelerate the pace of change. In the process, young people can shift from job seekers to job creators.
3. The question is how rapid rural transformation can be fostered so that economies across Africa's diverse rural areas can scale up the creation of attractive economic opportunities. Another question is how to prepare the younger generations to take advantage of – and make their mark on – this transformation.
4. The research and evidence base underpinning policies to address these questions is both patchy and fragmented. While there has been ample research on young people in Africa, much of it addresses issues around sexual and reproductive health, and social behaviour. Young people have only recently emerged in the agriculture and rural development literature as a distinct social category and target group.
5. The emerging understanding of how gender, age, class, marriage, family and religion interact to shape access to – and control over – the use of resources and assets can help to determine which economic activities will open up new spaces for young people while constraining others. This knowledge can support the development of well-targeted and effective approaches and strategies.
6. The Institute for Development Studies (IDS), a world leader in research on rural youth, has been selected as the grant recipient through a competitive process. The proposed project design was selected because of its innovative approach to

understanding rural youth, which links their imagined futures with the agricultural and non-farm sectors.

7. The proposed project is a mixed-methods research study aimed at generating new knowledge about rural youth. The study will analyse data from the Living Standards Measurement Study – Integrated Surveys on Agriculture (LSMS-ISA) of six sub-Saharan African countries: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda to generate insights on young people's engagement with the rural economy. Its integrated mixed-methods design will further the investigation of critical questions in four of those countries.
8. The project is in line with the goal and objectives of the IFAD Policy for Grant Financing and its strategic focus area of youth employment, as well as with the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025. The evidence and knowledge generated through the research will allow IFAD and other development organizations to more effectively reduce rural poverty, particularly its effects on young people. The project will create linkages with IFAD's country programmes and other development initiatives in Africa, and use youth networks established or strengthened through IFAD projects. Results will inform country strategies, policy engagement and future project design, informing targeting strategies and flagging areas of special attention.
9. There is a strong public good aspect to this project and the results of the study will be of interest to academics, policymakers and practitioners who are independent of IFAD.

II. The proposed project

10. The overall goal of the project is to strengthen knowledge of: (i) the employment dynamics of rural young people and the relationships between these dynamics and their welfare; and (ii) the socially and spatially differentiated perspectives of rural young people on agriculture, non-farm employment and livelihood strategies. The main objective is to inform and influence policies, strategies and programmes that affect rural young people's ability to move toward the futures that they imagine for themselves, and in the process to earn a decent living.
11. The direct target group for this research includes policymakers, development professionals and organizations involved in policy debates about rural young people, agriculture and employment. These debates take place at the national, regional and international levels, and the knowledge generated by this research will be relevant at all of these levels. Development practitioners will also directly benefit from the disaggregated analysis of rural young people's perspectives. The indirect target group for the research is rural young people, their organizations and the organizations that serve them. In addition to new understanding, the research will benefit young people by building capacity in the use of participatory methods of inquiry. Young people will also gain self-confidence from having the opportunity to articulate their perspectives on issues that matter to them.
12. The project will be implemented over three years and will have the following components: (i) analysis of LSMS-ISA data from six countries; (ii) collection and analysis of primary data in four countries using a mixed-methods design; (iii) knowledge management; and (iv) project management. The research components will integrate the capacity-building of local research teams to engage in policy dialogue and ensure uptake of research findings.

III. Expected outcomes/outputs

13. The main outcome of the project will be the availability of new knowledge about rural young people's engagement with employment and the rural economy, and their perspectives on: (i) their imagined futures; (ii) employment opportunities; and (iii) what they consider a fulfilling life. This new knowledge will raise awareness

among policymakers and development professionals, and provide young people with new perspectives, frameworks and options. The project will also enhance the capacity of governments and organizations to develop policies, strategies and programmes that address the livelihood-related needs and aspirations of young rural women and men.

14. Specific outputs will include a global synthesis publication, an advocacy video, sub-regional synthesis publications, policy briefs highlighting key findings and policy lessons emerging from study, and an event to present and discuss results.

IV. Implementation arrangements

15. The lead implementing organization for this research will be IDS in Brighton, United Kingdom. Partner organizations include the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, the University of Sussex Centre for International Education, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development's Migrating out of Poverty research programme consortium and ActionAid International.
16. IDS has significant experience in mixed-methods research projects and is a world leader in the area of rural youth. It also has extensive experience in managing large research projects. Drawing from all its members, it presents a team with a good mix of qualitative and quantitative skills.
17. The project leader will be responsible for providing overall research leadership and for the timely delivery of high-quality research. The project leader will be advised by a research reference group, which will provide guidance on the research methodology, monitoring progress and reviewing research outputs.
18. Monitoring, evaluation and learning will be embedded in all research and knowledge management activities. A monitoring, evaluation and learning plan will be developed with the IDS Knowledge Mobilisation and Impact unit. Building on the logical framework, indicators will be developed for all phases of the project. The knowledge management activities will ensure that the project's research and advocacy outputs are widely circulated, read, reviewed and discussed. A critical activity will be the dissemination of research findings to policymakers and programme managers in ways that can impact policy and practice.
19. There are no deviations from the standard procedures for financial reporting and audits.

V. Indicative project costs and financing

20. The total budget of the proposed grant project is US\$1,725,000, with IFAD financing amounting to US\$1,500,000 and cofinancing amounting to US\$225,000.

Table 1
Costs by component and financier
(Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Components</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>Cofinancing</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Analysis of LSMS-ISA data from six countries	236	36	272
2. Collection and analysis of primary data in four countries using a mixed-methods design	855	128	983
3. Knowledge management	125	18	143
4. Project management	173	43	216
5. Overhead/management fees	111	-	111
Total	1 500	225	1 725

Table 2
Costs by expenditure category and financier
 (Thousands of United States dollars)

<i>Expenditure category</i>	<i>IFAD</i>	<i>Cofinancing</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. Salaries and allowances	259	112	371
2. Consultancies	882	54	936
3. Travel and allowances	25	18	43
4. Workshops	51	-	51
5. Operational costs	72	-	72
6. Goods, services and inputs	95	-	95
7. Training	5	-	5
8. Overhead/management fees	111	41	152
Total	1 500	225	1 725

VI. Recommendation

21. I recommend that the Executive Board approve the proposed grant in terms of the following resolution:

RESOLVED: that the Fund, in order to finance, in part, Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Mixed-Methods Study to Inform Policy and Programmes, shall provide a grant of one million five hundred thousand United States dollars (US\$1,500,000) to the Institute of Development Studies for a three-year period upon such terms and conditions as shall be substantially in accordance with the terms and conditions presented to the Executive Board herein.

Kanayo F. Nwanze
 President

Results-based logical framework¹

	Objectives-hierarchy	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	Strengthen and deepen knowledge of: (1) the employment dynamics of young women and men, and the relationships between these dynamics and welfare; and (2) the socially and spatially differentiated perspectives of rural young people on work, employment and livelihoods.	It is not realistic to evaluate movement toward this goal over a 3-year implementation period.		
Objectives	Inform and influence the policies, strategies and programmes that affect the ability of young people in rural areas to earn a decent living.	Indicators of policy change and influence include changes to: 1. How the policy problem is framed 2. How it is prioritized 3. The level of expenditure committed to it 4. The content of policy 5. How policy is implemented	It is not realistic to expect measurable change in these indicators over the life of this 3-year project, especially as the main outputs will only become available toward the end of the implementation period.	The youth employment challenges continue to receive policy attention and investment. Policy makers and development investors are willing and able to engage with findings which may challenge their assumptions and deeply-held beliefs.
Outcomes and Outputs	The main outcome of the project will be the availability of accessible new knowledge about the perspectives of rural young people on (1) their imagined futures, (2) different opportunities for employment, and (3) the meaning of a decent living.	The following outputs are produced on schedule, freely available, accessed and referenced in academic and policy debated : 1. A global synthesis publication focusing on rural youth issues 2. A 5minute advocacy video 3. Two sub-regional synthesis publications 4. 5-7 policy briefs highlighting	Project quarterly reports listing download activity statistics by output (available from the IDS repository OpenDocs) Citation statistics for key outputs	Social and political stability in the countries selected for primary data collection.

¹ To be revised during inception phase, including quantification of indicators to the extent possible.

		<p>key findings and policy lessons emerging from study</p> <p>5. A final year event for the presentation and discussion of results</p> <p>6. A special issue of the <i>IDS Bulletin</i></p> <p>7. At least three Open Access academic papers in an international peer reviewed journal</p>		
Key activities	<p>Inception, planning</p> <p>Research Activity 1. Analysis of LSMS-ISA data from six countries</p> <p>Research Activity 2. Collection and analysis of primary data in four countries using a mixed methods design</p> <p>Knowledge Management</p>	<p>Inception report completed & signed off</p> <p>Activity 1 Working paper completed</p> <p>Field work completed</p> <p>Analysis completed</p> <p>Writing-up completed</p> <p>Synthesis reports & policy briefs produced & distributed</p> <p>Advocacy video produced & distributed</p> <p>Final event held</p>	Project quarterly reports	<p>Contract between IFAD and IDS signed</p> <p>Agreements and contracts between IDS and partners signed</p>